

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INKPRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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Acting Editor: Jacobus tenBroek Assistant Editor: Floyd W. Matson
2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley, California 94708

News items and changes of address should be sent to the Editor.

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Recipients of Aid to the Blind

ROBERT H. MUGGE*

(Editor's note: The article which follows presents the findings of the first official nationwide survey of recipients of Aid to the Blind under the Social Security system. Because of its importance as a systematic and highly informative record of the living and working conditions of nearly 100,000 blind Americans receiving public assistance, it is reprinted in full (with the exception of several graphic charts) as published in the April 1965 issue of WELFARE IN REVIEW, an official publication of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The author is Chief of the Demographic Research Group, Division of Program Statistics and Analysis, Bureau of Family Services.)

IN SEEKING TO EVALUATE the effects of aid to the blind, to learn the circumstances of people receiving this help, and to determine in broad terms the kinds of help these people are receiving, the Bureau of Family Services conducted in 1962 a nationwide survey of recipients of the program. While the Bureau conducts periodically various kinds of studies of the several public assistance programs,¹ this was the first survey ever conducted of nearly the entire nationwide caseload in aid to the blind. National data were obtained from reports submitted by the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, each of which conducted, according to Bureau standards, a separate survey either of their entire aid to the blind caseload or a large representative sample.²

Aid to the blind (AB) is by far the smallest of the national public assistance programs. Yet in its national dimensions it is by no means a minor program;

recipients total approximately 96,000. Furthermore, average assistance payments under AB are the highest among the four national programs providing for cash payments to needy persons. In November 1964 payments averaged \$84.99 monthly per recipient in aid to the blind, compared with \$79.14 in aid to the permanently and totally disabled (APTD), \$78.17 in old-age assistance (OAA), and \$33.20 in aid to families with dependent children (AFDC).

Who are the blind who receive assistance? Where do they live? With whom do they live? How much help do they need? And how much do they get? How and when did they become blind? How limited is their vision? What other handicaps do they have? How many of the recipients are working and in what settings? Such questions as these are answered to a substantial degree through the statistics obtained in the survey.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RECIPIENTS

Place of Residence

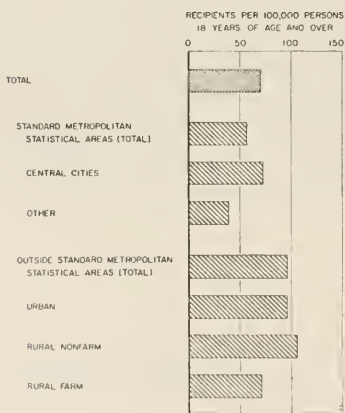
AB recipients were found to be almost equally divided between the standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's) and other areas:

	Percent of recipients
Total	100.0
In State:	
In SMSA county. Total	50.2
Urban:	
Urbanized area:	
In central city:	
City of 500,000 or more	15.1
City of 250,000 to 499,999	7.0
City of less than 250,000	12.1
Urban fringe	8.4
Other urban	3.1
Rural:	
Nonfarm	3.8
Farm	.6
Not in SMSA county. Total	49.4
Urban	19.7
Rural:	
Nonfarm	23.4
Farm	6.3
Out of State	.4

However, since nearly two-thirds of the total population of the country resides in metropolitan areas, the AB recipient rate (the proportion of the population receiving AB) is much higher outside than inside the SMSA's (figure 1). Within the metropolitan areas the recipient rate for the large central cities is nearly twice the rate for outlying areas, reflecting the fact that the low-income population tends to become concentrated in the urban centers. Still, the highest rates of all are found in the rural nonfarm areas and

Figure 1

AB RECIPIENT RATE, BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE



in the towns and small cities of non-metropolitan areas. The rates in rural farm areas are very similar to those in the central cities of SMSA's. In all respects, the relationships between relative size of recipient rate and type of place of residence in AB are very similar to the relationships found with respect to the other two adult assistance programs, OAA and APTD.

Age

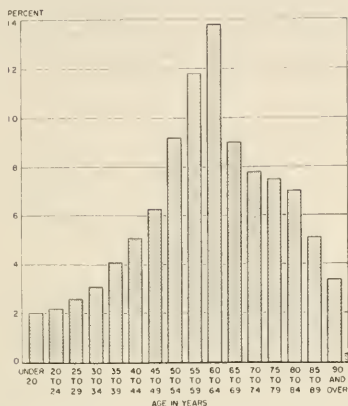
In contrast to the other federally aided public assistance programs, there are no age limitations in the Federal law for recipients of aid to the blind, although a number of States have laws excluding children from the program. Consequently, recipients range in age from childhood to extreme old age (figure 2). The rate at which people receive AB, however, varies greatly according to age:

Age in years	Estimated number of AB recipients per 100,000 population in 1962
Under 15	2
15-19	4
20-24	15
25-29	19
30-34	22
35-39	27
40-44	35
45-49	48
50-54	76
55-59	113
60-64	155
65-69	121
70-74	133
75-79	194
80-84	339
85 and over	736

The recipient rate rises steadily with age--from about 2 per 100,000 among younger children to 736 per 100,000 among those persons 85 and over. The only deviation from the steady rise with age is in the drop from the rate for those 60-64 years of age to the rate for those 65-69; this drop results from the fact that some States transfer recipients at age 65 from AB to OAA. In fact, the States generally tend to provide assistance to blind elderly persons through OAA rather than AB. It is estimated that in the latter part of 1962 there were more than 50,000 blind persons receiving OAA, compared with about 34,000 persons

Figure 2

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF AB RECIPIENTS



65 and over who were receiving AB. Still the bulk of the AB recipients were middle-aged or older. The median age of recipients in the survey was 61.3 years, and almost three-fourths of all recipients were 50 years of age and over.

Race and Sex

Seven-tenths of the AB recipients were white, three-tenths nonwhite (mostly Negro). About as many men as women received assistance under the program:

	Percent of recipients
Total	100.0
Total male	49.9
Total female	50.1
White, Total	68.7
Male	34.2
Female	34.5
Negro, Total	27.6
Male	13.4
Female	14.2
American Indian, Total	1.2
Male	.7
Female	.5
Other known race, Total	.4
Male	.3
Female	.1
Race unknown, Total	2.0
Male	1.2
Female	.8

As might be expected on the basis of relative economic circumstances among the

racial groups, the overall recipient rate of nonwhites exceeded that of whites by almost four to one. Nonwhite recipients represented about 205 of every 100,000 nonwhite persons 18 years of age and over; white recipients represented about 55 of every 100,000 persons in this age group. While women slightly outnumbered men in the caseload, the men were from a smaller population base.³ As a result, the AB recipient rate for men 18 years of age and over was somewhat higher (72 per 100,000) than the recipient rate for women (69 per 100,000). This difference, too, was found to vary by age. For all age groups under 70 the recipient rate for men was higher than that for women, but for the age group 70 years and over the recipient rate for women was higher.

Marital Status and Children

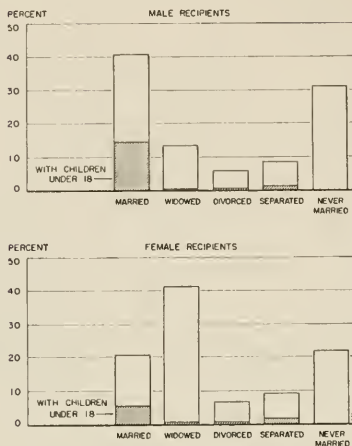
A relatively high proportion of the AB recipients had never been married--31 percent of the males and 22 percent of the females (figure 3). By contrast, the Census Bureau estimates that in the 1962 population 25 years of age and over, only 9 percent of the males and 7 percent of the females had never been married.⁴ Two-fifths of all female recipients, but less than one-seventh of all male recipients, were widowed. Marital estrangement was also high among the recipients; about 15 percent were separated or divorced. Two-fifths of the male recipients but only one-fifth of the female recipients were married. Four percent of both male recipients and female recipients were married to blind spouses; in most such instances, both partners were recipients of AB. A total of 17 percent of the male recipients and 9 percent of the female recipients had one or more children under 18 years of age at the time of the survey.

³U.S. Bureau of the Census: Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1963. Washington, D.C., 1963, p. 28.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 36.

Figure 3

MARITAL STATUS AND CHILDREN UNDER 18 OF AB RECIPIENTS, BY SEX



Living Arrangements

Nearly three-fifths of the AB recipients lived in what was considered to be their home--a home which the recipient or his spouse either owned or rented or was primarily responsible for (figure 4). Seventeen percent lived in the home of a son, daughter, or parent, and another 9 percent lived with another relative. Only 7-1/2 percent of the AB recipients lived in institutions; most of this group were in nursing or convalescent homes.

Recipients' Households

Just over two-thirds of all recipients lived in a private home with one or more adults, including 30 percent who lived with a spouse and 38 percent who lived with adults other than a spouse--in most cases a relative (figure 5). Twelve percent of the recipients were not living in housing units; they lived in institutions, hotels, rooming houses, and the like. One-fifth of all AB recipients lived where there were no other adults present to provide personal services if needed; 18 percent lived alone, and 2 percent lived

only with one or more children under 18 years of age.

Most households of recipients were quite small. The 88 percent of all recipients who lived in households included 63 percent living in households of only one, two, or three persons. Only 17 per-

Figure 4

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF AB RECIPIENTS

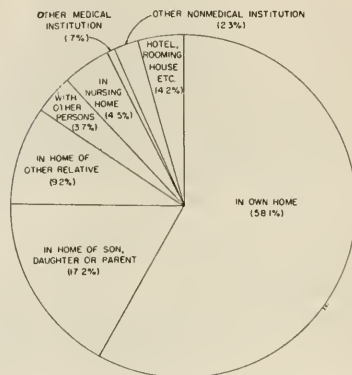
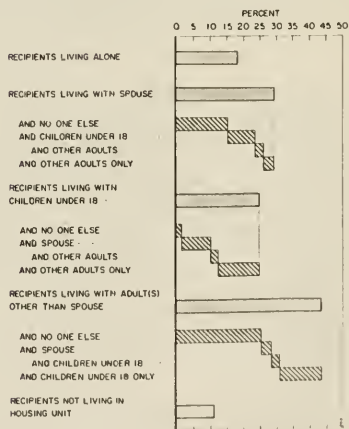


Figure 5

PERSONS WITH WHOM AB RECIPIENTS ARE LIVING



cent of all recipients lived in households of five or more persons:

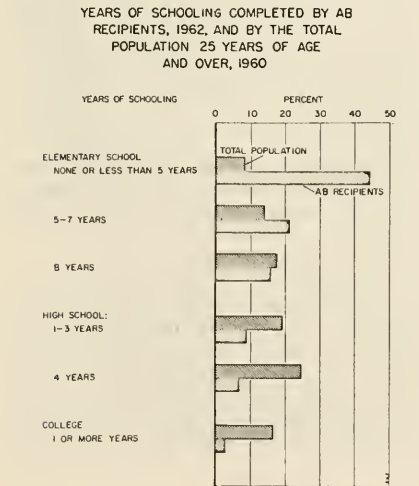
Number of persons in the household	Percent of recipients
Total	100.0
1	18.4
2	29.1
3	15.7
4	7.7
5	5.8
6	3.7
7	2.6
8	1.8
9 or more	3.1
Unknown	.4
Not in housing unit	11.7

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EMPLOYMENT

Years of Schooling

Among the recipients for whom education was reported as known (82 percent of all recipients), the level of formal schooling was generally very low (figure 6). Only 10 percent had finished high school. Sixty-five percent had finished fewer than eight grades of school, and 44 percent had completed fewer than five grades.

Figure 6



Special Educational Opportunities

The survey revealed that relatively few of the AB recipients had had the advantages offered by specialized teaching facilities to blind persons. Only 11 percent of the recipients had attended a school for the blind for as much as one semester, even though over a fourth of all recipients had been blind from birth or become blind in childhood. Nine percent of the recipients had received special teaching in the home under an organized home teaching program.

Much has been written of the recent advances in the development of special facilities, technical aids and devices which encourage a more independent life for blind persons. Talking Book Machines and records have been available to the blind from the Library of Congress for many years without charge. Yet, as late as 1962 only 11 percent of all AB recipients had a Talking Book Machine. Only 9 percent were able to read Braille. Five of every six recipients over the nation (84 percent) had neither a Talking Book Machine nor the ability to read Braille. Only 1 percent of all AB recipients had the help of a guide dog.

Recent Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Twenty-two percent of the recipients of AB were reported as having been known by or referred to a vocational rehabilitation agency in the 2 years prior to the study. Nine percent had received one or more services; only 2 percent had received these services to the point of job placement or followup:

	Percent of recipients
Total	100.0
Known by or referred to vocational rehabilitation agency in the last 2 years:	
No services received	12.7
Services received:	
Job placement and/or follow-up	1.6
Vocational training	2.5
Medical treatment and/or prosthetic appliances	1.5
Medical examination	1.4
Other	.9
Type of service unknown	.8
Known or referred more than 2 years ago ..	20.3
Never known or referred	49.2
Unknown whether ever known or referred ...	8.7

Current or Post Employment

Eleven percent of the men receiving AB were working for pay, either full or part time, at the time of the survey. At the other extreme, 16 percent of the men had never been employed for pay. At least 36 percent of the men had not held employment for 10 years or more, while 16 percent had worked within the past 5 years but were no longer employed.

The present and past labor force attachment was much lower for the women receiving AB. Only 3-1/2 percent of the women were employed at the time of the survey. Fifty-seven percent had never held paid employment, but of this group four-fifths were occupied as homemakers for their families. Most of the rest had not worked for pay for 10 years or more:

	Percent of recipients		
	Total	Male	Female
Total ..	100.0	100.0	100.0
Never employed:			
Homemaker	23.2	1.6	44.8
Other	13.1	14.4	11.8
Not currently employed. Time since most recent employment:			
Less than 1 year	1.9	2.8	1.0
1 year, less than 2	2.5	3.7	1.4
2 years, less than 5	6.7	9.1	4.3
5 years, less than 10	10.3	13.4	7.2
10 years or more	28.0	36.1	20.1
Unknown	3.1	4.0	2.2
Currently employed:			
Full time	2.7	4.4	1.0
Part time, regular	2.4	3.3	1.5
Part time, intermittent ...	2.6	4.2	1.0
Employment history unknown ..	3.4	3.0	3.9

Nature of Current Employment

Just under 8 percent of all recipients--about 6,600 nationwide--were employed for pay in 1962. Only about one-fourth of these persons were in sheltered work. Roughly one-third were in unsheltered employment for wages or salary. The largest group--36 percent--were self-employed, most of them in their own business or farm:

Number of recipients employed	6,600
Percent distribution by class of employment:	
Total	100.0
Self-employed:	
Own business or farm	27.5
State agency managed vending stand ...	4.4
Small business under State program ...	4.1
Employed for wages or salary:	
Sheltered work:	
Sheltered workshop	22.5
Industrial homework	2.9
Unsheltered work:	
Private employer	29.0
Government	2.6
Working without pay in family business or farm	2.1
Class of work unknown	5.0

PROGRAM DATA

Duration of Assistance

Aid to the blind is very similar to OAA in having a very low rate of turnover of recipients. In both of these programs long-term cases predominate, the majority of recipients having received assistance continuously for more than 5 years; by comparison, there are relatively few long-term cases receiving AFDC and APTD (figure 7). The median length of time since the present period of assistance began for the AB cases was 6.1 years; comparable medians for the other programs obtained in recent studies were 6.2 years in OAA (1960), 2.6 years in APTD (1962), and 2.1 years in AFDC (1961). Striking differences are observed between the two programs of assistance for the disabled, AB and APTD (figure 8). Of all AB recipients, 56 percent had received aid for 5 years or more. In the newer program of APTD (operative since 1950) only 26 percent of recipients had been aided for as long as 5 years.

Residence Prior to Assistance

As a whole, the AB recipients constituted a very stable population. Nearly two-thirds were born in the State which was providing them with assistance (figure 9). About one-fourth had been born elsewhere but had already lived in their present State for 10 years or more when

they first began receiving federally aided public assistance. Only 4 percent had lived in the State of current residence for less than 5 years when they first began receiving such assistance.

Figure 7

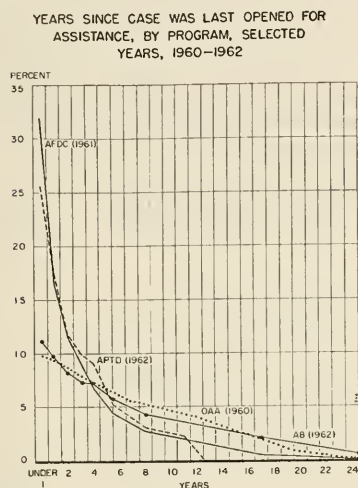


Figure 8

CUMULATIVE PERCENT OF AB AND APTD RECIPIENTS, BY LENGTH OF TIME SINCE MOST RECENT OPENING OF CASE

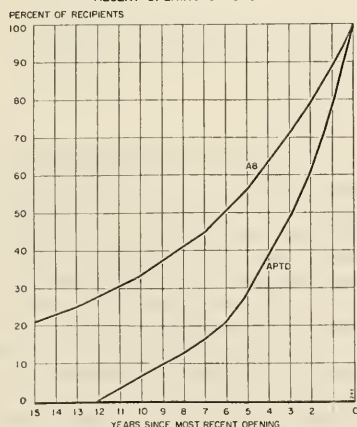
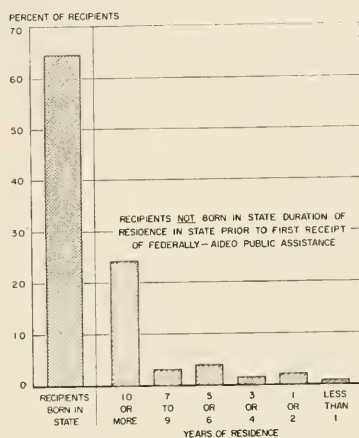


Figure 9

AB RECIPIENTS BORN IN STATE PROVIDING ASSISTANCE, AND THOSE BORN ELSEWHERE BY DURATION OF RESIDENCE IN STATE PRIOR TO RECEIVING ASSISTANCE



Other Assistance Going Into the Home

While the categorical aid programs are for the purpose of providing assistance to the individual who is needy and meets eligibility requirements, many of these recipients live in families whose other members are also destitute. If the services of a relative who is destitute are required by the blind recipient, the needs of such an essential person can be included in the recipient's assistance budget. Such persons, together with the recipient, make up the "assistance unit." The 1962 study showed that 9.5 percent of all AB recipients were joined by one other person in the assistance unit, and 0.2 percent of the recipients were joined by two or more persons; 90.5 percent of all AB assistance units thus included only the recipient.

Aside from the essential persons included with the recipient in the assistance unit, there were many other persons living in the home with recipients of AB. Sixty-four percent of all AB recipients lived in a home with one or more other persons

who were not included in the AB payment. In a large proportion of these homes (over two-fifths), one or more of these other persons were also receiving public assistance. Fifteen percent or more of the homes of AB recipients included OAA recipients, and over 12 percent included a family receiving AFDC. In just over 8 percent, there was another AB recipient sharing the home:

Number of recipients in housing units with persons not included in the AB assistance unit	55,000
---	--------

Percent distribution by type of assistance received by others in household.	
Total	100.0
None	58.1
General assistance only	1.6
Other public assistance, with or without general assistance. Total	40.3
Additional AB only	5.7
Additional AB and one or more other types	2.6
Aid to families with dependent children only	12.4
Old-age assistance only	14.6
Aid to the permanently and totally disabled only	2.8
Medical assistance for the aged only ..	.2
Two or more types without AB	1.9

Public Welfare Social Services

In addition to providing for public assistance payments and the activities involved in reviewing continuing eligibility and financial need for such payments, public welfare agencies make available to recipients many supportive and facilitating social services. Such help covers a wide range, including the same services extended to sighted recipients, such as the use of agency and community resources for medical care and health maintenance, recreation, education, improved housing, and the solution of interpersonal problems. Additional casework services may be necessary because of the difficulties associated with a severe visual handicap, such as: personal adjustment to the handicap; shifts in family roles and responsibilities due to the fact of blindness; and encouragement to accept retraining, achieve self-care, and gain security in mingling with the sighted world through work and social outlets. Some recipients need no special services beyond their as-

sistance payments; others require a little guidance, and still others need a great deal of sustained casework.

Caseworkers reported that approximately half of all AB recipients had received one or more social services in the 12 months immediately preceding the 1962 survey. For the largest group (32 percent), some arrangements had been made for the provision of needed medical care. Nearly 22 percent of all recipients had received service involving personal adjustment, family relationships, and/or participation in community activities:

Services other than financial assistance received from the public assistance agency in the preceding 12 months	Percent of recipients
Total	1/ 100.0
Arrangement for medical care	32.4
Arrangement for nonmedical services and/or facilities designed to increase recipient's capacity for self-care	9.1
Arrangement for homemaker service	2.1
Service related to improvement of recipient's housing	6.2
Casework service related to recipient's problems of personal adjustment, family relationships, and/or participation in community activities ..	21.5
None of these services	47.6
Unknown	3.4

1/ Total exceeds 100.0 since more than one type of service was reported for some recipients.

VISUAL AND OTHER HEALTH CONDITIONS

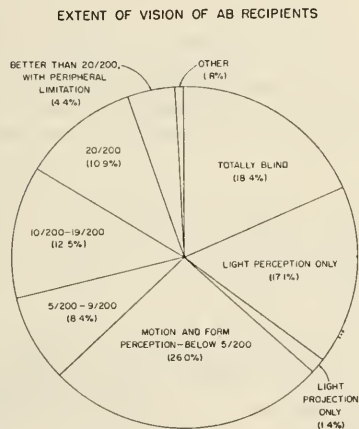
Extent of Blindness

Few of those individuals who are considered "blind" are actually totally blind; most, rather, have extremely limited vision. To be eligible for aid to the blind one does not have to be completely without sight. For purposes of this program Federal policy defines blindness as including "persons having insufficient vision to perform tasks for which sight is essential, as well as persons without vision." Each State has adopted its own specific definition of blindness for aid to the blind, in terms of ophthalmic measurement. The Bureau of Family Services has recommended to States the following

definition: "Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses" or "a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance of no greater than 20 degrees." That this definition is generally applied is indicated by the fact that fewer than 2 percent of all recipients were reported as not meeting such a criterion.

Fewer than one-fifth of the AB recipients were found to be totally blind (figure 10). However, most recipients had extremely poor vision; over 61 percent had visual acuity measurements poorer than 5/200.

Figure 10



Site and Type of Eye Affection

The defective vision of AB recipients resulted from a wide variety of different conditions, no one of which accounted for a very large proportion of the caseload. The only sizable groups reported were those whose visual limitations resulted from cataracts (15.3 percent of the total), atrophy of the optic nerve (12.6 percent), noncongenital glaucoma (11.7 percent), and degeneration of the retina (9.5 percent). Recipients were distributed as follows in terms of the site and type of their reported affections:

	Percent of recipients
Total	100.0
Eyeball in general:	
Glaucoma, other than congenital	11.7
Myopia, detachment of retina specified ..	.3
Myopia, detachment of retina not specified	2.7
Panophthalmitis, endophthalmitis	.4
Atrophic globe	2.7
Absence of eyeball	.6
Other	4.7
Cornea and sclera:	
Keratitis	4.8
Other	4.3
Lens:	
Cataract	15.3
Other	1.3
Uveal tract:	
Uveitis	3.0
Chorioretinitis	3.2
Sympathetic ophthalmia	.7
Other	1.1
Retina:	
Retinitis, retinopathy	3.3
Detachment of retina	1.5
Retinal degeneration	9.5
Other	1.6
Optic nerve, optic pathway, and cortical visual center:	
Optic nerve atrophy	12.6
Other	1.5
All other:	
Other specified	1.7
Affection not specified	11.2

Etiology of Blindness

The origins of the conditions leading to blindness were not so well reported; for 19 percent of the recipients the origin was reported as "unknown to science," and for 29 percent as "not determined by physician or not reported." (The latter group included those recipients--8.7 percent of all recipients--whose eyes were tested by an optometrist.) Thus, a positive report as to etiology was available for only about 52 percent of the recipients. Twelve percent were reported as having conditions which originated with infectious diseases, 7 percent had conditions brought on by trauma or poisoning, less than 1 percent had neoplasms as the origin, for 18 percent the origin was another type of disease or disorder, and for 15 percent it was another type of condition, resulting from a prenatal influence. The distribution of all recipients according to major etiological classification was as follows:

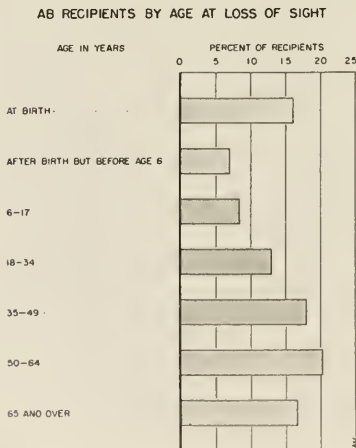
	Percent of recipients
Total	100.0
Infectious diseases. Total	11.7
Gonorrhea	.5
Syphilis	5.0
Trachoma	1.9
Other	4.3
Trauma and poisoning. Total	7.3
Occupational activity	.7
Other	6.5
Neoplasms	.7
Diseases and disorders, not elsewhere classified. Total	17.8
Diabetes mellitus	3.3
Senile degeneration	9.1
Vascular diseases	3.1
Other	2.3
Prenatal influence, not elsewhere classified. Total	15.0
Hereditary origin	5.3
Congenital origin other than hereditary	8.3
Prenatal influence not specified as to type of origin	1.4
Unknown to science	18.8
Not determined by physician or not reported	28.9

Age of Loss of Sight

The age at which blindness began varied widely among the recipients (figure 11). A sizable group had been blind from birth; however, a large proportion had not become blind until they reached old age.

The reported age at loss of sight, of

Figure 11



course, varies with the current age of the recipients. The older a recipient, the older he is likely to have been when he lost his sight. Thus, it was found that a high proportion of the aged recipients were already middle aged or older when they lost their sight. Of the recipients who were 65 and over at the time of the survey, 41 percent did not lose their sight until after they had passed their 65th birthday, and fully 70 percent lost their sight after reaching 50. Only 4 percent of the aged recipients had been blind from birth, and only another 7 percent of them became blind in childhood, i.e., after birth but before reaching 18 years of age.

Impairments Other Than Blindness

Caseworkers were asked to report whether recipients in the study had any obvious physical impairments in addition to blindness. Nineteen percent of the AB recipients were reported to have another physical defect known to the worker:

	Percent of recipients
Deafness or serious hearing impairment	9.2
Serious speech defect	1.5
Missing arm, hand, leg, or foot	1.0
Paralysis, including cerebral palsy	2.3
Other defect or deformity of limbs, back, spine or trunk	4.5

Chronic Physical or Mental Conditions

Caseworkers were also asked to report if, on the basis of medical evidence in the records of the agency, the recipient had any of a selected list of chronic physical or mental impairments. (If the recipient had two or more conditions, only the most serious was to be reported.) Without doubt many chronic conditions are missed in such reporting, since such conditions frequently would not come to the attention of the agency in the form of medical evidence. Still, 45 percent of the recipients were reported on this basis to have one of the listed conditions. The most common conditions were heart or artery disease (13 percent), diabetes (6 percent), arthritis or rheumatism (6 percent), and mental deficiency or retardation (5 percent). The total distribution of re-

cipients by reported conditions was as follows:

	Percent of recipients
Total	100.0
Tuberculosis	.5
Asthma or any chronic respiratory disease other than tuberculosis	1.6
Syphilis or other venereal disease	1.3
Heart or artery disease, any kind except cerebral	13.1
Cerebrovascular disease	2.4
Parkinson's disease	.3
Epilepsy or convulsions	1.0
Mental deficiency or retardation	5.1
Psychosis, psychoneurosis, or personality disorder	2.3
Diabetes	6.2
Arthritis or rheumatism	6.2
Cancer	1.0
Stomach or duodenal ulcer	1.3
Kidney stones or other kidney disease	1.4
Gallbladder disease	.8
Cirrhosis, hepatitis, or other liver disease	.2
None of above conditions reported	55.4

Mobility and Travel Arrangements

Further evidence as to the general condition of the AB recipients was supplied in terms of whether the recipient was confined to the home by his condition, or, if not, his degree of independence in getting around outside the home. Relatively few of the recipients (16 percent) were confined to their home because of physical or mental conditions, and of these about half were confined to a bed or wheelchair. Thirty-six percent of the recipients were able to get around unaided, while 40 percent needed the help of another person:

	Percent of recipients
Total	100.0
Confined to home because of physical and/or mental condition:	
Bedfast	3.7
Chairfast	4.3
Not bedfast or chairfast	7.9
Not confined to home. Travel arrangements outside of home:	
Alone:	
Without cane	22.7
With cane	13.3
With aid of:	
Member of family or friend	39.5
Paid guide	.5
Guide dog	1.0
Other	.8
Travel arrangements unknown	4.0
Mobility status unknown	2.2

CONCLUSION

The statistics obtained through the aid to the blind survey add up to a graphic picture of a large group of handicapped Americans whose limitations are compounded by financial need.

Regular program statistics have previously provided information on the number of blind persons receiving this assistance, in what States and counties they were living, how much financial assistance they received, types of medical care provided for, and how many people entered and left the program each year. This survey now adds information, in broad terms, on who these people are--their age, sex, living arrangements, education, employment, and the like. Some major findings are:

People outside the metropolitan areas are much more likely than metropolitan residents to receive AB.

Recipients tend to be middle-aged or older; their median age is 61 years.

Recipients were almost equally divided among men and women; women in the program tend to be older than men.

Nonwhites are almost four times as likely as whites to receive AB.

Relatively few of the recipients are married.

Nearly one-fifth of the recipients live alone. One recipient in 14 lives in an institution.

Most recipients have limited education. Two-thirds have completed fewer than eight grades.

Only one-sixth of all recipients either are able to read Braille or have the use of a Talking Book Machine.

Only 8 percent of the recipients are employed, most of them part time.

Most of the women receiving aid have never held employment.

The average recipient has received aid to the blind continuously for the last 6 years.

Most AB recipients are still living in their native State, and most of the others were long-term residents of their current State before they began receiving assistance.

Many of the AB recipients live with

recipients of other public assistance programs.

About half of all AB recipients had received casework services through the public welfare agencies in the preceding year--mostly in the form of arrangements for medical care.

Fewer than one-fifth of the AB recipients are totally blind, but all have such poor sight as to handicap them severely.

Nineteen percent of the AB recipients have a physical impairment in addition to blindness.

Forty-five percent of the recipients are known to have a chronic physical or mental condition aside from blindness.

Eighty-four percent of the recipients are not confined to their homes, and nearly half of the recipients not confined are able to get around outside the home without help.

Thus, the statistical picture of these people contains many problems and much discouragement in terms of their future prospects. In light of their ages, their disabilities, their limited education, their long dependency, and many other factors, it is clear that there is little likelihood that many of these recipients can be rehabilitated to full self-support again. And yet, there is also encouraging information--the small number of recipients in institutions, the ability of many to get around unaided, the many without indications of chronic conditions, etc.--suggesting the high potentials for self-care if not self-support. The data, taken altogether, strongly suggest the needs for continuing and increasing educational, rehabilitative, and social services to help these individuals to realize their full potentials, to meet and overcome their problems, and to make the most of whatever strengths they still have.

NORTH DAKOTA CONVENTION

The annual convention of The Federated Blind of North Dakota was held at the Gardner Hotel, Fargo, June 12-13.

Highlights of the program were: a discussion of the vocational rehabilitation for the blind activities of the state agency, led by Kermit Piltingsrud of the state agency staff; a strong endorsement of the organized blind movement by Director Murry of the Fargo Trades and Labor Council, AFL-CIO; a report by John Nagle, Chief of the NFB Washington Office; and a thorough consideration of the Federation's legislative proposals now pending before Congress; and the address delivered by John Nagle at the well-attended convention banquet chaired by Ada E. Mark.

Resolutions were unanimously adopted by the convention in support of the Federation bills concerning liberalizing disability insurance for the blind, elimination of economic need in vocational rehabilitation, and establishment of minimum wage standards for handicapped workers employed in sheltered workshops.

Mr. Francis Sears was re-elected treasurer, Dr. C. E. Hanson of West Fargo was elected as secretary of the North Dakota organized blind affiliate, and Mr. A. L. Strom was chosen to represent the organization at the Washington convention of the NFB. Martha Bjornseth was elected editor-in-chief, and Mavis Hanson and Mrs. Francis Sears co-editors of "The Retina".

Lorge Gotto, President, and Rudolph Bjornseth, Vice President, continue in office for one more year.

A FURTHER ARGUMENT ON THE WHITE CANE

E. W. Kramer
Piano Service
404 N. Garfield
Wenatchee, Wash.

Normand, 2-7330

"The Tuner alone preserves the tone"

5/17/'65

Dear Dr. tenBroek:

I am not at all convinced by Mr. Kossick's letter in the May issue of the Monitor of long cane technique's superiority. I have been using short canes for over sixty years now. I started school for the blind in 1905 when I was 14 years old. I came to school from a farm where when it was deemed necessary for me to go somewhere away from home I was led by the hand. Imagine what it meant to me, then, when I saw the boys from school going anywhere and everywhere they wished with the aid of just a little slender cane. Within a couple of months I was doing the same. After school I worked flocks of little towns in different parts of the middle west. And during these last 16 years I have been working a little aggregation of mountain towns here in Washington state. During this time I have taken two spills, neither of them serious and both due to carelessness on my part and all this with short canes 36 inches long, and half-inch thick at the top and three-eighths at the bottom.

As for the notion that short canes were carried to advertise our blindness, evidently the author of the letter in question is too young to remember that our canes were not always white. Also, that a lot of us carried little bamboo canes that weren't any thicker than pencils. They were not nearly as conspicuous as some of the clubs and lengths of aluminum pipe nearly as tall as their users used in the "Hoover" technique. I get my little hickory canes from the Minnesota Organization and they sell a lot of them and a lot of them are being used back there.

When the white cane laws were passed their sustaining argument was that they would protect blind people crossing streets. The thought of their being "Blind badges" didn't come up until sighted hirelings sold the idea that they could tell blind people how to get around better than the blind folks themselves.

When we went to school, before so many sighted brothers and

sisters found it so profitable to teach the blind their ways (being paid with funds begged from society), we used to think that we were almost normal. The finest compliment folks paid us those days was when they pointed out something for us to look at and then remembering they would say, "Oh, I forget you can't see."

No, short white canes can be used more daintily, more skillfully and infinitely less conspicuously than the long ones and can give all the information, assurance and selfconfidence that is needed for competent cane travel.

Cordially yours,

E. W. Kramer

SUMMIT COUNTY SOCIETY OF THE BLIND DEDICATES WORKSHOP

By Clyde Ross

The Summit County Society of the Blind (SCSB), along with the Philomatheon Society of the Blind of Canton, are in a unique position. Both organizations are of the blind. Both organizations carry out the functions usually associated with agencies FOR the blind. These two organizations are 22 miles apart.

Summit County has a population of approximately half a million. In 1913, the blind of Summit County organized the Welfare Association of the Blind. Its primary interest was social and welfare.

In the early 1940's a group was organized to promote legislation and rehabilitation for the blind. It was called the Summit County Federation of the Blind.

In 1948, there was a reorganization and a consolidation, and the SCSB came into being. It inherited all of the purposes familiar to organizations of the blind, plus the specific goal of acquiring a Home for the Blind. In April, 1950, the SCSB purchased a building suitable for a home. In May of that year, we held our first meeting there. Eleven blind people now live there. The Home for the Blind at 24 N. Prospect St. in Akron, Ohio became known to the community as the place where you could find blind persons and where both sighted and blind could get information pertaining to the blind.

Gradually, the SCSB developed some recreation. For five years, we have had classes for adult blind. We are now completing one year of a class for multiply handicapped blind children.

Sunday, May 23rd, the SCSB dedicated its Workshop for the Blind. It was a grand occasion -- Congressmen, State Senators and Representatives, City officials, clergymen, service clubs, civic organizations, representatives of organizations of the blind and FOR the blind from neighboring cities and, of course, there were some citizens from Summit County. Perhaps the two most important people present were Walter and Edith Jesse who gave us the building which has 13,000 square feet of floor space. Ten thousand square feet are in two areas suitable for industry. The building is fireproof and centrally located. We are aware of the evils that can destroy the effectiveness of a Workshop for the Blind.

About ten years ago, a Mrs. Mensch died. She left the SCSB a tidy sum, which amounted to \$408,000.00, after all litigation was cleared. It has made possible many projects that the SCSB could not have carried out otherwise. Now another benefactor has opened the door to a new area of service that the SCSB will provide for the blind people of our area.

Two thoughts stand out. First: Material things. In 1948, we were worth \$300.00. Today, we are worth \$750,000.00. This has come about in 17 years. Can we grow in proportion during the next 17 years? Second: The gifts that have come to us were due to service that we had rendered and to service that we are expected to render. The community has accepted our philosophy of an organization of the blind. It is within our power to keep it an organization of the blind and attempt to render the many and varying services needed by the blind or relinquish our opportunities and responsibilities to a society FOR the Blind. Seventeen years ago we had faith, purpose, and some plans. Today, we still have faith, purpose, friends, and a foundation upon which to build.

PROFILE: SIR THEODORE TYLOR

(Editor's note: Sir Theodore Tylor is a well-known blind law tutor at Oxford. Last August, when my colleague Professor Borah and I were traveling in Europe, we caught an early morning train from London and spent a day with Tylor at his home in Oxford. He wined and dined us most hospitably and engaged us in scintillating conversation. We compared notes on teaching law, keeping current with the cases as the courts hand them down, use of braille for note-taking and research

and, in general, the situation of a blind person in academic life. Tylor has been prominent in university administration. He was one of Rupert Cross' teachers. Rupert Cross, also blind (see the November 1964 issue of the BRAILLE MONITOR) occupies the Vinerian Chair of Law at Oxford, one of the most famous chairs any where in the world in English law. Cross was vacationing in Scotland the day we were there and so we missed seeing him. The account below is excerpted from the February 1965 issue of THE NEW BEACON.)

The headquarters building of what is now the Royal National Institute for the Blind was opened on a day in March, 1914 by King George V. After a precarious period, the fortunes of the Institute (called until that day the British and Foreign Blind Association) were taking a dramatic turn for the better. Five months before, Sir Arthur Pearson, the blind press baron called by Winston Churchill a "champion hustler," had erupted onto the Executive Council. The Council's chairman, Dr. (later Sir) Washington Ranger, was also blind, with gifts equivalent to Pearson's, but less spectacularly expressed; he was a solicitor of distinction. In the Armitage Hall, the royal party was introduced by Baden-Powell to a guard of honor formed by scouts from Worcester College for the Blind. The patrol leader was Theodore Tylor, a month short of his 14th birthday and already inspired by Washington Ranger's example to pursue a career in the law. In 1962 after nearly 40 years as Balliol Law Don and as a member of the RNIB's Executive Council, Theodore Tylor would become, like Ranger, chairman of the Institute, being knighted this year for his services to blind welfare. . . .

Theodore was born with glaucoma; to save the minute residuum of sight, his father took him to a Wiesbaden specialist in 1904. The expenses of such a journey told on the family when in 1915, age 40 and at the height of his career, Henry Tylor died. To keep her children at school Minnie Tylor became secretary of the Adult School's Union. Previously she had done social work among mothers in the Birmingham slums. Theodore was 9 years of age -- by four years the youngest boy in the school -- when he entered Worcester College for the Blind. His early education had been by governess (from 5 to 8 years of age he gained a grounding which, when he went to school, set him far ahead of his contemporaries) followed by a year in a sighted Birmingham school. While he was at Worcester, new life was put into the school by the appointment as headmaster of G. C. Brown. In 1913, the roll dwindled to four pupils; by 1918, when in the Armistice term Theodore Tylor went out to Balliol, there was a ratio of seven masters to twenty pupils. Unsurprisingly, Worcester around this period produced a higher percentage of university

graduates than any school in the country. It produced, too, the game of stilt-fighting, now fallen in desuetude, but perhaps worth reviving.

The great passions of Theodore Tylor's life have been the study (and later teaching) of the law, chess, and blind welfare. Law and chess ruled his undergraduate life; he would study morning and evening, playing chess every afternoon Theodore Tylor rose in the game to be captain of Oxford for his four undergraduate years, beat Flohr and Tarkakower and drew with Alekhine in the famous 1936 Nottingham Masters' Tournament and ranked fourth in England for 25 years, becoming a life master in 1955.

Plans were made for him to enter on graduation a firm of solicitors in Birmingham. When he got a First in jurisprudence in 1922, however, A. L. Smith, the master of Balliol, persuaded him that, for someone with a disability like his but with a bent for teaching, the academic life was perferable to the professional -- if less lucrative. Theodore Tylor has never regretted his agreement. . . Since 1923 when he took his B.C.L., he has taught jurisprudence, being called to the bar in 1928. He loves teaching; believing that no one could excell simultaneously in the three dons' pursuits of teaching, administration and research, and having administrative talents, he has (periodical articles excepted) deliberately sacrificed research in the interests of the other two. . . . His reading apart from the law is restricted to about 30 braille volumes of light and detective fiction a month.

Many of his energies have been devoted to administrative work, both for his college and for the RNIB. In his capacity as Balliol's Estates Bursar, he has lately had dealings with the Frank's Commission on the future of Oxford University. . . . With his mentor Hilliard, Theodore Tylor as a young post-graduate drafted some of the legislation which went into the 1923 and 1925 university acts.

WHITE CANE TEST CASE IN BERKELEY

Charles Bird, a 22-year-old blind student at Oakland City College with a superior academic record, died March 2, 1965, three days after being struck by a car while crossing a Berkeley street.

Married and the father of a child, Bird had been trained at the California Orientation Center and was an excellent traveller. He was

using a 64-inch fiberglass cane, the handle of which was green in color.

The driver insisted that: (1) he did not see the cane; (2) after clearing the path of the driver's car, Bird then became confused or alarmed and pulled back directly into the car's path.

The police at first were very reluctant to prosecute the driver under the California White Cane Law making violations of its provisions a misdemeanor. It was only after considerable activity by a group of the blind that a suit was filed. Trial was held before Judge Floyd Talbott without a jury in the Berkeley-Albany Municipal Court. Judge Talbott has promised a verdict in July. He is considering the proper construction of the statute.

The California White Cane Law forbids any person other than those wholly or partially blind to "carry or use on any street, highway, or in any other public place a cane or walking stick which is white in color or white tipped with red." A driver of any vehicle "who approaches or comes in contact with a person wholly or partially blind, carrying a cane or walking stick, white in color, or white tipped with red, or using a guide dog," is required to "immediately come to a full stop and take such precautions before proceeding as may be necessary to avoid accident or injury to the person wholly or partially blind."

The defense attorney argues that a cane which is tipped with red, cannot be one which has a handle of some other color, and that it is necessary for the driver to see the white cane before he can be held liable. These arguments can hardly be regarded as conclusive. The phrase "tipped with red" can only refer to the duty end of the cane. The object of the red tip and indeed of the white cane is to serve as a symbol of a blind person and thus put the driver on notice of the need for unusual caution. What would be the point of requiring that the part of the cane held by the hand be any given color?

Moreover, drivers who hit pedestrians in the walkways are held responsible without proof that they saw the victims. The same theory should apply to the White Cane Laws. Proof that the driver saw the pedestrian or the cane is usually impossible to produce unless supplied by the statements of the driver himself. The defendant's interpretation would render the White Cane Law virtually unenforceable. The language of the White Cane law is quite exact. If the blind person is "carrying a cane" the driver must "immediately come to a full stop and take such precautions before proceeding as may be necessary to avoid accident or injury" to the blind person. The law presumes that the cane carried by a

blind person will be seen. The driver in this case did not immediately come to a full stop and take such precautions" as were necessary to avoid the accident.

The Deputy District Attorney handling the case, in preparing his brief for the court, has made inquiry into the use of the white cane by blind persons and the general mobility of the blind in this community. He has talked to a number of blind leaders. Dr. tenBroek has supplied him with the history and purposes of the White Cane movement and some relevant cases and documents.

Meanwhile, on June 6 another blind person, Tom Mendoza, carrying a white cane and crossing a street in nearby Oakland, was struck by a car and suffered a broken leg. Whether the driver will be prosecuted awaits the outcome of the Berkeley case.

LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE POOR

THE LEGAL NEEDS of the poor and possible ways of meeting these needs more effectively were explored by the first nationwide Conference on the Extension of Legal Services to the Poor, held November 12 - 14, 1964, in Washington, D. C. The conference, sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development of the Welfare Administration, had the immediate aim of furthering cooperation between lawyers and social workers in their efforts to ameliorate the conditions of the poor. About 150 persons attended, including representatives of law schools, social workers, jurists, welfare officials, and staff from community development projects.

In her welcoming address, U. S. Commissioner of Welfare Ellen Winston noted the particularly difficult position of the poor in regard to legal problems. An income that cannot adequately provide for basic daily needs has no margin for legal expenses. The general lack of education among the poor makes them more likely victims of injustice and exploitation. At the same time, as the country grows in population and complexity, more laws and regulations and regulations are inevitably instituted, and thus there are more instances in which people require legal help. Dr. Winston directed special attention to legal safeguards needed by the 8 million "poorest of the poor" who receive public assistance under laws and requirements which vary from State to State and some of which change from year to year:

"We must see that their legal rights are not denied to them; that the provisions for their help and protection which are written into our laws and policies are not obviated by practice. In the majority of situations affecting these people across the Nation, this problem does not arise; but we have not fully evaluated or explored corrective mechanisms to take care of such problems when they do arise, or taken steps fully to protect people from any infringements of their rights under these programs."

The 1962 Public Welfare Amendments were cited particularly by the Commissioner as a means available to the States in helping to meet the needs of the poor for legal services. As one example she pointed out that States and localities could make available protective services to the aged who are no longer fully capable of managing their own affairs. Under the 1962 provisions, States can obtain 75 percent Federal financing for such services. Dr. Winston also mentioned the demonstration projects under the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offences Control Act of 1962 and the community action programs under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 as offering opportunities for meeting legal needs of the poor.

Attorney General Nicholas deB. Katzenbach noted in his address that while major steps are being taken to protect the rights of poor persons accused of a crime, we have just begun to give serious attention to their broader, more common legal needs:

"There are large numbers of poor people who discover that they have a binding obligation to pay a finance company for furniture never delivered or for a TV set that never worked. There are large numbers whose cars or washing machines are repossessed after months of payments -- who have no idea they are entitled to the return of their equity. There are large numbers whose public assistance is reduced or revoked -- who have no concept of their rights of appeal."

Making their rights known to the poor is one of the major problems, Mr. Katzenbach said. Second, he warned that even if rights are known they can provide little protection if they are entangled in a maze of technicalities. This is particularly true for the poor, who cannot "walk through life with a lawyer at their side." Third, protection of rights depends on advocacy, and there must be lawyers from all parts of the law who are willing to represent the poor man in trouble. Mr. Katzenbach placed special emphasis on his fourth point:

"For rights to be worth anything, they must be honored -- without lawyers; courts are not the only forums in which rights are adjudicated. There are administrative proceedings, there are dealings with landlords, merchants, social workers, and welfare officials -- with all the people whose decisions can deeply change the lives of the poor. It is in these areas, far more often than in the courts, that the poor person needs a counselor and an advocate."

Legal Needs

Professor Monrad Paulsen of the Columbia Law School, speaking on family law, observed that there are two legal systems -- one for persons with means, and one for those without. This is manifested in a variety of ways, he said, such as the stipulation of additional requirements before legal assistance will be provided to the poor (as in divorce cases), and the options available to the wealthy (such as private restitution to avoid having their children brought before the juvenile court) but not to the poor. Persons of wealth rarely have contact with neglect proceedings, he pointed out. He recommended that an especially close look be given to neglect cases when needs for legal assistance for the indigent are being ascertained.

The relation of the poor to government was examined by Edward V. Sparer, Director of the Legal Services Unit, Mobilization for Youth. He noted that as government has assumed a more active role in the lives of citizens through various laws and programs, the poor person's primary contact with the law has shifted from courtrooms to the anterooms of public agencies, where he awaits determinations that may vitally affect his life.

To indicate the scope of the legal problems under these new circumstances, Mr. Sparer recounted numerous issues that have been raised throughout the country in regard to public assistance administration, such as "suitable home" provisions, "man-in-the-house" rules, and "midnight raids" on clients. He related how legal representation for families denied public assistance in New York helped correct instances of misinterpretation by assistance workers of that State's "welfare abuses" law.

In expounding several major points on the relationship between poverty and law, Miss Elizabeth Wickenden of the National Social Welfare Assembly pressed home the point that public assistance is a matter of

entitlement under law. Because of the beneficent purposes of public welfare, the possibilities of oppressive practices are often overlooked, she said.

Miss Wickenden offered four basic propositions underlying the relationship of the poor to the law:

1. The poor in America are a minority group, and a primary function of law is protection of minority groups against oppression, even in the form of "beneficent despotism" of the majority.

2. In an affluent, highly industrialized society, laws and institutions are the essential weapons against poverty, in contrast to a generally impoverished society where the central problem is to produce enough to go around. This country, Miss Wickenden said, could well afford to support at a decent level the aged, the disabled, dependent children, and others outside the work economy if there were the organizational and legal mechanisms to do so. Moreover, the fact that the affluent society is based on a high degree of organization, of course, makes the poor even more dependent on institutions and laws.

3. A maximum range of clearly defined rights and entitlements offers the strongest protection of the individual's security and freedom. Thus, the worker depends on his union contracts and labor laws; the businessman on incorporation, contracts, antimonopoly and other laws; the social security beneficiary has his entitlements spelled out in the law. The most difficult kind of entitlement to define sharply is that which is based on individual need, such as public assistance, Miss Wickenden said. She suggested that, in the long run, this difficulty can only be overcome by, first, reducing need by expanding measures such as social insurance and, second, expanding social services that serve all people regardless of economic status.

4. All individuals should have access to legal services and devices of appeal against legislation and bureaucratic decisions that threaten their rights. Miss Wickenden cited three basic areas in which public welfare clients need the help of lawyers: to secure equal access to the provisions of the laws; to right the inadequate or inequitable laws that help keep people in a disadvantaged position (for example, the many mothers who must rear children without the help of the fathers need greater protection from the law and legal help on problems related to support, separation, divorce, and custody); and to protect against discriminatory application of the law.

Lawyers, working with social workers, can help fill the enormous need of tenants in slum areas for legal assistance, according to Miss Nancy E. LeBlanc of the Legal Services Unit, Mobilization for Youth, New York City. "The lawyer can make it possible for them to exercise their legal rights -- rights which are often so hedged in technicalities that even lawyers have problems," Miss LeBlanc said. "The uneducated, frequently non-English-speaking people, simply give up."

Because poor tenants have not been able to afford lawyers and landlords are satisfied with present laws, landlord-tenant law has virtually stood still, she said. Since tenants are rarely able to appeal cases, they are settled almost wholly in the lower courts, and thus no new precedents are established through appellate decisions. She went on to cite numerous illustrations of the need for advancement in the law and of the need for legal representation to bring about changes as well as to assure protection under present law.

David Caplovitz of the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, discussed the consumer problems of the poor as revealed by a recent study he conducted in New York City. He found that of the 500 low-income families in this survey, more than 60 percent had consumer debts outstanding; one in every five families had experienced legal pressures because of missed payments. Only 27 percent had as much as \$100 in savings.

With their low educational level and different cultural backgrounds, many of the families were easy victims of "bait advertising," high-pressure salesmen, and misrepresentation of products or terms of payments. Furthermore, when asked where they would go for help if they found themselves being cheated, 64 percent said they did not know. Among those who did know of sources of help, there were some who would rather pay what the merchant claimed rather than go to court and lose time from work.

Mr. Caplovitz said that, many times, the consumer fails to appear in court because he did not receive the summons:

"Instead of finding the defendant, the process server (who, in these cases is hired by the plaintiffs' lawyer) throws the summons away. Low-income families are especially likely to be victims of this practice since they are not apt to know how to protect their legal rights. Merchants are well aware that judgments by default are common and take advantage of this fact. However poor the merchant's case may be, he can

count on winning a certain proportion simply because the consumer does not show up to defend himself."

NEW KING-HARTKE AID BILLS

Congressman Cecil R. King of California, and Senator Vance Hartke of Indiana have again joined forces to improve the federal-state Aid to the Blind program.

The latest King-Hartke effort -- identical bills H.R. 8923 and S. 2170 -- introduced in the early weeks of the first session of the 89th Congress, would do the following:

Eliminate any time limitation on the exemption of all resources when a recipient of Aid to the Blind is working toward self-support under a state-approved rehabilitation plan; place a ceiling on the amount of relatives' responsibility contribution; abolish liens and residence requirements; require states to fix a floor for aid and to meet individual needs above that floor; allow the states under Title XVI to retain separate standards and separate administration, and to withdraw from a Title XVI combined plan of aid if they wish to do so; provide for specifically designated federal funds to help in meeting medical and hospital costs of needy blind persons; increase federal matching money in aid payments, and require that additional federal money be passed on to recipients; provide that new "self-care" and "self-support" services authorized to be made available under the 1962 Social Security Amendments not be tied to the aid grant, that they be given only if requested, and that they be categorically administered to meet the special needs of blind persons.

Some of the proposals contained in the King-Hartke aid bills are already included in H.R. 6675, the 1965 Social Security Amendments which have passed the House of Representatives and are now pending before the Senate. These provisions embrace increased federal matching in aid payments, a kind of "pass-on" device which may or may not result in larger aid grants; and, most important of all, specially designated federal funds to help the states in providing medical and hospital care to needy persons, including recipients of Aid to the Blind.

In order to focus attention upon the restrictive effects of residence requirements in state Aid to the Blind programs, Congressman

King and Senator Hartke have also joined in introducing identical bills -- H. R. 8319 and S. 2169 -- to abolish residence as an eligibility factor in public assistance for the blind.

WAR-BLINDED MASSEURS IN GERMANY

(Editor's note: The following article is reprinted as it appeared in DER KRIEGS BLINDE, May 1965, a monthly publication of the Organization of German War Blind. The article was published under the English-language heading, "World-Wide Collaboration of the Blinded People Federations," which is a regular feature in the German publication.)

In the (Western) German Federal Republic there are nearly 400 war-blinded people working as masseurs. About 150 of them have an own practice which they carry on, where as nearly 250 (others) are engaged at hospitals, curing institutions and bathing establishments. The blind masseur is in Germany and in most of the European countries in high esteem, not only with the patients but particularly also with the doctors. Therefore it will not be surprising to hear, that all of the 400 war-blinded masseurs have a lot of work and are fully occupied.

The Federation of the War-Blinded People of Germany regards it as one of its important tasks to realise every year new courses, in order to continue the professional training of the war-blinded masseurs. Governmental offices bear the maximal part of the costs resulting from this. These repeating and perfectioning courses are necessary in order to enable the war-blinded masseurs to be well able to compete with his full-seeing colleagues. There are always important and famous specialists of the medical world which are asked to direct in each case these training and perfectioning courses. There might still also be mentioned that the Federation of the German War-Blinded People edits every second month a (magnetophonic) tape journal for the war-blinded masseurs. On the magnetophonic tape there are spoken items and reports from the special literature for the masseurs. Also this is a contribution for the maintainance and consolidation of the efficiency of our masseurs.

STUDY COMMITTEE SET FOR CAROLINA

In a move warmly welcomed by South Carolina's organized blind, the state Legislature has approved a resolution to establish a nine-man study committee "to study the situation in the state concerning the blind." The resolution adds that the committee "shall include an investigation of the opportunities for employment of blind persons and their problems in coping with the rapidly changing conditions of today."

"The real significance behind the action of the legislature is that, for the first time, members of the State Senate and House of Representatives have been sufficiently aroused and convinced that the needs of South Carolina's blind warrant legislative investigation and attention," according to Donald C. Capps, president of the S. C. Aurora Club of the Blind and editor of THE PALMETTO AURORAN.

Capps pointed out that establishment of the precedent-setting study committee stemmed from the introduction last year of a bill sponsored by the Aurora Club proposing a state commission for the blind. The bill was said to have failed largely because the organized blind and other interested parties were not able to testify in its behalf.

STATE CONVENTION IN NEW MEXICO

The New Mexico Federation of the Blind held its annual convention on May 29 in Albuquerque. The delegates elected as their new president Richard Bryant, of 136 Rio Seco, Santa Fe, and also chose the following officers: First Vice-President, Pauline Gomez, Santa Fe; Second Vice-President, Pat Madrid, Albuquerque; Third Vice-President, Tony Garcia, Albuquerque; Recording Secretary, Elvira Chavez, Albuquerque; Corresponding Secretary, Mabel Bryant, Santa Fe; Treasurer, Juanita Salazar, Santa Fe; chairman of the national convention delegation, Albert Gonzales, Santa Fe; and sergeant-at-arms, Serafin Griego, Albuquerque.

One of the highlights of the convention was the witnessing of the definite organization of a new chapter -- the Las Luminarias Chapter, which will include members from three counties (Bernalillo, Sandoval and Valencia) under the leadership of Chapter President Serafin Griego.

The convention's major guest speaker was K. O. Knudson, representing the Nevada Federation of the Blind. Another speaker, from the California Council of the Blind, was Ambrosio Griego. Outgoing President Pauline Gomez gave a report of her effective five-year tenure at the helm of the NMFB, entitled "Yes, We Have a Future."

The delegates approved resolutions calling upon the state legislature to: repeal the relatives' responsibility law enacted in 1957; pass a law in its next session guaranteeing the right of the blind to organize, and to take action to exempt blind persons from paying property tax up to a maximum of \$3,000 valuation.

INFORMATION ON PERKINS BRAILLER

The Perkins Brailier, manufactured by the Howe Press of Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, Massachusetts, has been described in detail in a recent brochure distributed by the Press. Over 26,000 of the Brailiers are said to be presently in use by transcribers, lawyers, students and others -- with the students ranging in level from primary grades through college graduate work.

Current prices, F.O.B. Watertown, are: Perkins Brailier (Standard), \$90; Perkins Brailier (Unimanual), \$105; Brailier Carrying Case, \$15. Prices are available on request for Brailiers to make special size dots or for the use of extra heavy paper.

Among the new products also available from the Howe Press are: pencil stylus with eraser, a new concept of traditional stylus with pocket clip; freehand drawing stylus, which produces upright individual Braille dots; E-Z Read Slate on which Braille can be read without removing paper from pins; reversible stylus with teflon eraser; lifetime teflon eraser, pencil shape; ACM slate, for blind programmer; "Dymo" tape, a clear plastic adhesive tape for labelling; a single-line slate for use with "Dymo" tape. Prices available on request from the Howe Press.

AGENCY CONFERENCE ON STANDARDS SET

A national conference on standards is being planned for October 31 by the Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services for the Blind. The Commission, known as "COMSTAC," was established

by the American Foundation for the Blind and other agencies in 1963 to work toward uniform standards for the evaluation and "accreditation" of organizations in the field of work for the blind.

From the outset the Commission has appeared to reflect the interests and viewpoint of the sponsoring American Foundation and its associated national agencies. Organizations of the blind themselves, such as the National Federation of the Blind, have been conspicuously absent from the roster of groups and individuals asked to formulate supposedly objective "standards" to be applied to all organizations in the field. The National Federation has, however, been invited to attend the fall conference on standards which will review the work of various committees.

"To date, 131 civic and professional appointees have been working on 12 technical committees which are formulating standards," according to a May 24 bulletin released by COMSTAC. It is the claim of COMSTAC that "Through the development of an accreditation system, the Commission . . . will promote self-improvement among agencies and services for the blind and will assure those blind persons using services and the public that supports them, that agencies are meeting basic operating standards."

NEWS FROM RHODE ISLAND

by Albert R. Piccolo

(Editor's note: The following report on activities and legislative developments affecting the blind of Rhode Island is excerpted from a letter from Mr. Piccolo, a leader of the R.I. Federation of the Blind.)

"The Blind Operators Guild and the RIFB did not succeed in their efforts to eliminate the 3 percent set-aside fund; we did achieve a minor success by a provision in the tax law which exempts stand operators from collecting the 4 percent sales tax. It will be convenient for them not to collect the sales tax; it most certainly would be an inconvenience if they were obliged to do so. I am disappointed in our failure to eliminate the set-aside fund. Governor Chafee's record-breaking 137-million-dollar budget has been approved; a state lottery bill failed; the General Assembly enacted a fair housing law by a favorable 54-42 vote in the House and a 28-16 margin in the Senate; a new department of natural resources has been established; the sales tax has been increased to 4 percent, effective June 1 . . .

The Newport organization planned to introduce the voting bill, but was advised by legislators not to do so

As far as I know, a state sales tax cannot be collected in a Federal building. Those who have stands outside of such buildings will benefit as a result of the exemption granted by the state to blind persons. You may recall I obtained a copy of the Massachusetts law for the Guild. They preferred to introduce their own version of a vending-stand measure For a short while, there was a stand in the Newport courthouse which was later closed because of insufficient [business]. This is further evidence of the state's willingness to establish operators in state building when it is possible. Nevertheless, I still would like to see an all-embracing vending-stand statute similar to the Wyoming law. However, I would not dare to request absolute preference, because it appears almost illegal to me.

MONITOR MINIATURES

Western Michigan University is offering, commencing this Fall, a 16-month Master's Degree program for home teachers of the blind. In addition to academic subjects, the course includes supervised observation and supervised field work experience. A B.A. degree in one of the behavioral sciences is required. Tuition plus a \$2,800 stipend is available from the federal VRA.

The newly established Mason H. Bigelow Award was presented by the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness to Ralph G. Hurlan, Ph.D. Dr. Hurlan is internationally known as an authority on statistics on blindness, and his estimates concerning the U.S. blind population have been generally accepted for the last 20 years.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is testing mobility and communications devices for the deaf-blind under a \$98,000 VRA grant A new regional library has been established in Talladega, Alabama so that blind Alabamans need no longer depend on the Atlanta regional library.

A new book, co-authored by Dr. Benjamin Spock, the world famous pediatrician, is entitled Caring for Your Disabled Child (Macmillan) One of the many activities of Audrey Tait and the Southern Nevada Sightless is the teaching of bowling to blind Las Vegas children. Their activities received featured coverage

recently in the Las Vegas SUN.

Inspired by California's Chief of the Division for the Blind, Perry Sundquist, Alameda County has set up a demonstration project to place blind aid recipients in jobs. . . . Hogan C. Hamby, husband of Mildred Hamby, president of the Michigan Council of the Blind, succumbed recently after a fatal automobile accident. . . . Another loss to the Federation was Rulon Jensen, Legislative Chairman for the Gem State Blind. His death came shortly after the most successful legislative session for the blind in that state's history.

Perry Sundquist will be the featured guest speaker at the convention of the Gem State Blind scheduled for September 9 to 12 in Boise, Idaho. . . . The Montana Association for the Blind will hold its convention July 16 - 18 at Montana State University, Bozeman. President Russ Kletzing is scheduled to give the banquet address.

It's a boy! Dr. Fatima Shah, Second Vice-President of the International Federation of the Blind, became a grandmother for the first time on April 26, in Karachi, Pakistan. Mother Rehanna, Grandmother Fatima, and great grandfather Dr. Kureshi, are all celebrating the happy event.

Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey presented \$500 scholarships offered by Recordings for the Blind to Lewis M. Fraas, physics major at the California Institute of Technology; William Wright Cool, Miami University of Ohio, who plans to major in computer planning; and Gerald W. McCollum, who is entering Harvard University.

The Argosy Recording Club, c/o Mrs. Frances F. Patterson, Chairman, Volunteer Services, National Braille Press, Inc., 88 St. Stephen Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02115, will tape record books of fiction and non-fiction this summer on your tape, or it will provide tape at \$1.75 per 1800 ft. reel.

The Missouri School for the Blind will have a new superintendent as a result of the resignation of Dr. George D. Heltzell to accept a position as superintendent of the St. Charles (Mo.) County School District. . . . The Sacramento Bee reports that Kathleen Dorn, 19, of Albany, New York, is joining the order of the Sisters of Mercy and that she is believed to be the first blind person accepted for training as a nun.

An L-shaped school desk to facilitate reading and writing braille for blind youngsters is available at a cost of \$88.70 plus shipping charges from the American Woodcraft, Inc., P.O. Box 52, Union City, Michigan. The desk is 20 inches wide in front of the seated student and also provides a 29 inch width on one side. The height is adjustable from 20 inches to 30 inches. A matching chair can be obtained for \$25.75, plus shipping charges.

From the Sacramento Bee; Ophthalmologist Frank C. Winter from the Stanford University Hospital performed more than 100 eye operations during six visits to Mexico, the first of which had been planned as a vacation. . . . Eleven graduate fellowships in the study of problems of the visually handicapped are available at Michigan State University. For information write to: Mrs. Lou Alonso, Acting Coordinator, Special Education, Room 353 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

The Federal Bar Association has named Charles R. Simpson, a 43-year-old blind attorney for the Internal Revenue Service, as the outstanding career government lawyer of the year. Simpson, who served two terms as a Democratic member of the Illinois General Assembly, received the award from Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach.

A state law "to facilitate ready and authoritative identification of goods or articles made by blind persons" has been signed by Governor Richard J. Hughes of New Jersey. The new law gives the Commission for the Blind authority to approve and label all products sold in the state as "blind-made", regardless of whether they are made in the state.

A Russian official who exploited the labors of handicapped shop workers to the tune of almost a quarter of a million dollars -- 200,000 rubles -- was recently sentenced to be shot by a firing squad. . . . Joseph Kohn has been appointed as Executive Director of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind succeeding George F. Meyer upon his retirement.

In a letter to President Kletzing, Evelyn Weckerly of Birmingham, Michigan says: "Very recently I was able to borrow tape recorded proceedings of the NFB's 1962 and 1964 national conventions. I want you and the others responsible for this service to know how much I appreciate it. . . . When I joined the South Oakland County Chapter, the national organization, of which I automatically became a member,

seemed extremely remote. Although I learned something about the NFB leaders through articles in the Braille Monitor, they did not really become individual personalities until I received these tapes. . . . The recordings of the national convention gave me the kind of coverage of possible information which no printed report can give and they are the next best thing to being there because I can participate in spirit. "

James Nyman, the blind Professor of Political Science who has been teaching at the University of Arizona got himself in the news in two ways: on June 5 in Palo Alto he married Miss Nobuko Uematzu; beginning in September he will be teaching political science at the University of Chicago.

New techniques for the preservation of eyes to be used in corneal transplants have been developed by a team of English researchers. By chemically preparing and freezing them, they may be preserved as long as 5 or 6 months. Michael J. Hogan, Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of California Medical School in San Francisco, announced recently that a grant of research money will be used to install the new techniques at the medical school.

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